United Nations A/53/591

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 November 1998

Original: English

Fifty-third session
Agenda item 78

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Motaz M. **Zahran** (Egypt)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/47 of 9 December 1997.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 September 1998, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 63 to 79, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 12 to 16 and from 19 to 21 October (see A/C.1/53/PV.3–12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 14th to 21st meetings, on 23 and from 27 to 30 October and on 2 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.14–21). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 22nd to 31st meetings, from 3 to 6 and on 9, 10, 12 and 13 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.22–31).

4. There were no documents before the Committee under this item.

98-36555 (E) 241198

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.6/Rev.1

5. At the 18th meeting, on 22 October, the representative of Hungary, on behalf of *Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba,* the *Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland,* the *Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco,* the *Netherlands, New Zealand,* the *Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal,* the *Republic of Korea,* the *Republic of Moldova, Romania,* the *Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine,* the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* and the *United States of America,* introduced a draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction" (A/C.1/53/L.6/Rev.1). Subsequently, *Bosnia and Herzegovina,* the *Congo, Cyprus, Malta* and *Thailand* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At the 22nd meeting, on 3 November, the Secretary of the Committee made a statement concerning operative paragraphs 3 and 4 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.6/Rev.1 (see A/C.1/53/PV.22).

7. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.6/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 8).

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

8. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions relating to the complete and effective prohibition of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and to their destruction,

Noting with satisfaction that there are one hundred and forty-one States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction,[1] including all the permanent members of the Security Council,

Bearing in mind its call upon all States parties to the Convention to participate in the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Conferences, including the exchange of information and data agreed to in the Final Declaration of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction,[2] and to provide such information and data in conformity with standardized procedure to the Secretary-General on an annual basis and no later than 15 April,

[1] Resolution 2826 (XXVI), annex.

[2] BWC/CONF.III/23, part II.

Recalling its resolution 46/35 A, adopted without a vote on 6 December 1991, in which it welcomed, *inter alia*, the establishment, proceeding from the recommendations of the Third Review Conference,[3] of an ad hoc group of governmental experts open to the participation of all States parties to identify and examine potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint,

Recalling also its resolution 48/65, adopted without a vote on 16 December 1993, in which it commended the final report of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to Identify and Examine Potential Verification Measures from a Scientific and Technical Standpoint,[4] agreed to by consensus at the last meeting of the Ad Hoc Group at Geneva on 24 September 1993,

Recalling further its resolution 49/86, adopted without a vote on 15 December 1994, in which it welcomed the final report of the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention,[5] adopted by consensus on 30 September 1994, in which the States parties agreed to establish an ad hoc group, open to the participation of all States parties, whose objective should be to consider appropriate measures, including possible verification measures, and draft proposals to strengthen the Convention, to be included, as appropriate, in a legally binding instrument to be submitted for the consideration of the States parties,

Recalling the provisions of the Convention related to scientific and technological cooperation and the related provisions of the final report of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts, the final report of the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held from 19 to 30 September 1994, and the final documents of the Review Conferences,

Recalling also the Final Document of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998,[6] in which the heads of State or Government noted the progress achieved so far in the negotiation of a protocol, stressed the importance of achieving further substantive progress for the conclusion of a universally acceptable and legally binding instrument designed to strengthen the Convention and reaffirmed the decision of the Fourth Review Conference urging the conclusion of the negotiations by the Ad Hoc Group as soon as possible before the commencement of the Fifth Review Conference,

Welcoming the reaffirmation made in the Final Declaration of the Fourth Review Conference[7] that under all circumstances the use of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and their development, production and stockpiling are effectively prohibited under article I of the Convention,

Recalling the Declaration of the informal Ministerial Meeting, held in New York on 23 September 1998, in which the participants and the co-sponsors affirmed their strong support for the Convention and for strengthening the effectiveness and improving the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Welcomes* the information and data provided to date, and reiterates its call upon all States parties to the Convention to participate in the exchange of information and data agreed to in the Final Declaration of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention;[2]

---

[3] See BWC/CONF.III/23.

[4] BWC/CONF.III/VEREX/9 and Corr.1.

[5] BWC/SPCONF/1.

[6] A/53/667–S/1998/1071, annex I.

[7] BWC/CONF.IV/9, part II.

2. *Also welcomes* the progress achieved so far in the negotiation of a protocol to strengthen the Convention and reaffirms the decision of the Fourth Review Conference urging the conclusion of the negotiations by the Ad Hoc Group as soon as possible before the commencement of the Fifth Review Conference and urging it to submit its report, which shall be adopted by consensus, to the States parties to be considered at a special conference;[8]

3. *Calls upon* all States parties, in this context, to accelerate the negotiations and to redouble their efforts within the Ad Hoc Group to formulate an efficient, cost-effective and practical regime and seek early resolution of the outstanding issues through renewed flexibility in order to complete the protocol on the basis of consensus at the earliest possible date;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention and to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conferences, as well as the decisions contained in the final report of the Special Conference, including all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Group;

5. *Calls upon* all signatory States that have not yet ratified the Convention to do so without delay, and also calls upon those States that have not signed the Convention to become parties thereto at an early date, thus contributing to the achievement of universal adherence to the Convention;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction".

---

[8] See BWC/CONF.IV/9.